

1772
A
L E T T E R

TO THE

Rev. Mr. Whitefield.

DESIGNED

To correct his Mistaken Account of
Regeneration, or the *New Birth*.

WRITTEN

Before his Departure from LONDON;

T H E N

Laid aside for some private Reasons;

And now Published

To prevent his doing *Mischief* among the Common
People, upon his Return from GEORGIA.

WITH A

P R E V I O U S L E T T E R,

Addressed to the

R E L I G I O U S S O C I E T I E S.

THE SECOND EDITION.

By TRISTRAM LAND, M. A.

Late Fellow of Clare-Hall in Cambridge, Curate of St. James's
Garlickhith, and Lecturer of the United Parishes of
St. Anthony, and St. John Baptist.

L O N D O N:

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TO THE
Religious Societies.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following Letter was written by me when I had some Opinion of Mr. *Whitefield's* Piety, and seemingly upright Intentions, but at a Time when I was much more fully perswaded (notwithstanding the great Success he so much boasts of) he had been doing no little Mischief among many of you.

It was then immediately sent, (one Part excepted) to the *Author* of the *Weekly Miscellany*, a good while before Mr. *Whitefield's* Departure from *London*, but, for Reasons ap-
B proved

proved by the *Judicious Mr. Hooker*, laid aside at that Juncture as improper to be printed.

I assure you, and every other Reader, that having never been Fond of appearing in Publick, I was very well satisfied with his Determination.

The true Reason of sending it abroad now, (when it may be judged more improper,) is to caution some People among ourselves, of *weak Heads*, but I hope *honest Hearts*, against a *Person* who, upon his Return among us, is very likely to mislead them, if not timely prevented; whose past Conduct has discovered, how loose his Sentiments are about *Church Communion* in general, and Writings shew, how far he has departed in *Doctrine* from the Church of *England* in particular.

For As I was at first ready to think, (when I saw many among you blowing up his Character to an undue

undue Size, and greatly deceiv'd by his Appearances of extraordinary Sanctity and Labours,) So still I remain of the same Opinion; That If You and the Rest of our *Communion* were once thoroughly convinced, that (notwithstanding all Pretences,) this *Gentleman* had maintained, and preached *Doctrines* contrary to those embraced by our *Holy Mother*, and founded upon the *Scripture*; However Some giddy Folks (Who are *given to change*) might run after him, or Some Others think fit to feed their Curiosity, Yet the most sensible Part of you, and All the discreet and sound Members of the Church of *England*, wou'd soon discountenance this *Assuming Novelist*, and resolve, according to St. *John's* Direction in such like Cases, *not to receive him into their Houses, nor bid him God speed.*

Having this Opportunity, I take the Liberty also to caution you

against some other *Gentlemen* about the Town of a like *Enthusiastical Cast*, and the same *new Sect* with Mr. *Whitefield*; *Whose* indecent Behaviour towards the *Established Clergy* at their private Meetings, comes too well attested not to find Credit among Us, and *Who* are said to have unanimously agreed with their *Partner* in his rude and unjust Censures, before they were printed.

By the following *Marks*, when *They* come in your way, you may easily distinguish them.

They are like *Vain Persons* who think themselves *Handsome*, apt to despise *Others*, Looking upon *Themselves* as exquisite *Pictures* of *Holiness*; *They* (forsooth) wou'd have you esteem *Them* as *Patterns* of *Piety*, and *Filled* with the *Blessed Spirit*, whilst they represent *Us* as *Dumb Dogs*, *Profane*, and *Carnally minded*; *We* *They* tell you, with great reverence, know no more of the *Gospel* than *Mahomet*,

Mabomet, whilst *They* are intimately acquainted with the true *Spiritual* Sense of the Scriptures ; *They* are said to tell their Disciples that *Christ* must be formed in them by the *Holy Ghost*, as he was in the Womb of the *Virgin Mary* ; and accordingly to ask them, whether *Christ* be already formed in their Bodies ; *They* sometimes pray, that God wou'd vouchsafe to pour down the *Gift* of the *Holy Ghost* upon some One present at their private Meetings ; *They* talk much of the *Pangs* of the *New Birth*, their *inward Feelings*, *Experiences*, and *Spiritual Miracles*, &c. &c. In short, their Faith, (which they often mention) You will find an ill-grounded *Assurance* ; their *Hope*, an unwarrantable *Presumption* ; and their *Charity* (as I said) *Censoriousness*, and a *Contempt* of their Brethren of different Sentiments.

These *Young Quacks* in *Divinity*,
Who are Running about the City and
Taking

Taking great Pains to distract the *Common-People*, Breaking the Peace and Unity of our excellent *Church*, I say, I wou'd have you beware of; Because They create *Divisions* and *Offences* contrary to the *Doctrine* which you have learned, and yet by good *Words* and fair *Speeches*, in fact, have deceived the *Hearts* of the *Simple*; Who under the Garb of an *affected Humility*, are continually *vending* their *Pills* and *Potions*, and have already done much Injury to some *well-meaning Patients*.

Of this Sort are *They*, Who exactly answer *St. Paul's* Description, in *creeping into Houses*, Who lead *Captive silly Women*, ever learning and never able to come to the *Knowledge of the Truth*, Which don't endure *sound Doctrine*, but heap to themselves *Teachers*, having *itching Ears*, Which having turned away their *Ears* from the *Truth* are turned unto *Fables*.

GENTLEMEN,

GENTLEMEN,

I am a hearty Well-wisher to your general Designs of unfeigned *Piety* and *Charity*; Which if Mr. *Whitefield* and his *Party* had been willing to promote, without *Innovations* in *Doctrines*, You may be sure They wou'd never have met with the least Opposition from any good *Christians* or *Christian Clergymen*.

Instead then of attending to *Them* and their *whimsical Notions*, I hope You will invariably observe the excellent *Rules* laid down for your Conduct at your original Institution, and Dean *Stanhope's* useful *Hints* to you upon another Occasion.

In doing so, You will certainly, under GOD, be greatly Assisting in carrying on the Cause of true *Religion*, and the Interests of our *Communion*: But if You encourage *new-fangled Doctrines*, or *Practices*, the Church of *England* has ever been a Stranger to, (to whose Service hither-

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to You have always thought it your Glory and highest Honour to be devoted,) I must forewarn you, our sincere *Friends* will then be Jealous and quickly grow Weary of you, and you may reasonably expect the Censure of your *Superiors* : For I must needs say, Considering the *Religious Sentiments* and *Political Principles* of some of the chief Leaders of these *Methodists*, It may concern our Ecclesiastical and Civil Governors carefully to watch your Behaviour, lest in the End you should be artfully led into fatal Mistakes, and Designs destructive of both Parts of our Constitution.

Before I put an End to this Letter, give me Leave to mention an artificial Design of *Satan*, which he has ever had to baffle your good Intentions, and in which I fear these *Methodists* will be found greatly Assisting, tho' I verily believe They don't at all mean to engage in his Service.

Service. The Design is this ; To put Novices and New Beginners in the Spiritual Life, upon undertaking Severities more than they can bear, or greater than they can well go thro' with ; with this Purpose you may be sure, that when they grow weary of them they may throw all Religion aside, together with their voluntary Usages, as too burthensome and not fit to be practised.

In this Case, you may see the crooked Windings of the old cunning Serpent ; He first screws Persons up to an Excess in Religion, and makes them, as the Royal Preacher expresses it, *Righteous overmuch*, in order to *destroy themselves* ; to give them a thorough disliking of it, and at last to determine them to bid a final Adieu to it.

Hence it is, You have found in fact, some of your own Members, who in their youthful Days, have happily begun to tread in the Paths

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of Virtue, and yet, from the Uneasiness arising from an ignorant Zeal and indiscreet Conduct in Religion, have been tempted by the Devil with Success, wholly to quit a pious Conversation, and sometimes have fallen into the most vicious Courses, to the great Scandal of all sincerely good Christians, and the Triumph of the Atheistical and Unbelievers.

Believe me, our grand Adversary never more glories and prides himself, than in making such a Conquest.

Let me here therefore, to prevent his Delusions, remind you of the Parable our Saviour spake to the Scribes and Pharisees.

No Man, says he, putteth a Piece of a new Garment upon an old, if otherwise both the New maketh a Rent, and the Piece that was taken out of the New agreeth not with the Old; and no Man putteth new Wine into old Bottles, else the new Wine will burst the Bottles and be spilled, and the

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the Bottles will perish ; but new Wine must be put into new Bottles, and both are preserved : That is, as may be concluded from the Words of the Context ; It is not at all convenient to enter young Christians upon the strictest Course of Virtue all at once, but by Degrees, lest They go back and walk no more with our Saviour, upon Account of the Severities of his Holy Religion : 'Tis much more proper to condescend to the Weaknesses of new Beginners, and not presently require of them religious Austerities.

However, if Any of you are willing to be more severe in your Behaviour, than other good Christians think absolutely necessary, take Care least *Satan* Tempt you to Spiritual Pride on this Account, and a Contempt of your Brethren of another Persuasion : In God's Name go on *from strength to strength*, and persevere to the End of your Journey in *an honest and good Heart, bringing forth*

forth Fruit with Patience, to Perfection.

But still remember, I intreat you, that the *Seed sown*, often *falls upon a Rock*, which as soon as it *springs up withers away*, because it *lacketh Moisture*.

Now in explaining the Parable of the Sower, our Saviour Himself has told us, *They on the Rock, are They which when they hear receive the Word with Joy, and These have no Root, which endure for a Time, and for a while Believe, and in the Time of Temptation fall away.*

Remember likewise what Jesus said to One, on another Occasion, who seemingly with great Affection resolved to follow Him, and become his Disciple; *No Man says He, Having put his Hand to the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.*

I conclude all I have to say at present, with that most excellent
Advice

Advice of St. Peter, which I hope will be duly considered by every One of You.

Ye therefore Beloved, seeing you know these Things before, Beware least ye also being led away with the Error of the Wicked, fall from your own Stedfastness; but grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

I am

Your faithful Friend,

to Serve You,

Tristram Land.

P. S. I am very desirous of getting rid of that load of Honour a certain *good-natured* Gentleman was pleased to fix upon me, of being the Author of some late Remarks upon
Mr.

Mr. *Whitefield's* Journal, address'd to the *Religious Societies*; which I here declare I was no Way concern'd in, and shall only say further, with Regard to that *extraordinary* Performance, (which in the most glaring Manner imaginable, shews the Man and his Communication, and by which it is plain He cannot be exceeded by the warmest-headed *Quaker* in the Kingdom) that it is thought by Most so very silly and sinful, that even his greatest Admirers, of common Understanding, might have been safely trusted with the Perusal, without any one's kind Endeavours to point out the Faults of it.



Of the Author of some late Remarks upon
 the said Journal, I am not to be
 considered as the Author of any
 of the Remarks upon the
 said Journal, or of any of the
 Remarks upon the said Journal.

(21)

TO THE
Rev. Mr. Whitefield.

S I R,

IT is commonly reported, You seldom converse with the Clergy of the Church of *England*, though You are pleased to Visit Dissenting Teachers, and often mix with the younger Part of the Laity of all Denominations: And indeed, if the Former deserve those Reflections You have cast upon All of Them, without any Distinction, in the Preface to your Sermon upon *Regeneration*; for any thing I know, You may be in the Right to shun Them, and seek out better Company: But since I am One of Those, Who It seems, am not to expect the Favour of talking with You in Private,

Private, I take the Liberty, with all due respect and great plainness, to acquaint You in this Manner, with some very ill Consequences Which I think, must needs attend Your Writings and Conduct.

And in the first Place, What if It should appear, upon Examining Your Sermon, You have wholly mistaken the main Subject of it; and in the Preface, injudiciously recommend to Us, Preaching on a Point, Which as stated by You, is directly opposite to the Doctrine of the Church Established.

This Sir, when proved, If you deserve the Character generally bestowed upon You, will require on Your Part, *Confession* and *Self-abasement*, and likewise shew You a much better Reason than You have, I must say with great want of Modesty, hinted at, why We don't treat upon *Regeneration*, in that Sense You are so fond of, but
Which

Which We know to be contrary to the *Sound Mind* of the Church of *England*, whose *sober Doctrine* We are determin'd to maintain against all *Enthusiastical* or *Whimsical* Persons.

Regeneration, or that *New Birth* which commences at the time of *Baptism*, I am apt to believe, the Body of the People are as well instructed in as any other *Christian Doctrine*, since 'Tis so clearly expressed, and so frequently repeated in our Office of *Baptism*, publick and private, in the *Catechism*, in the Order of *Confirmation*, and also in the *Articles*, that He *who runs may read*, and readily understand it.

If Therefore You had thought fit to insist upon and explain the *New Birth*, according to the Intention of the *Church*, in which You are *at present* a Teacher, I dare say, No one of your Audience, how

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numerous

numerous soever, of common Understanding, wou'd have been so much alarmed at the Sound of the Word, as You imagine, Page 2, or cou'd with Truth and Justice tell you, *He had not so much as heard whether there be Any such Thing as Regeneration or no*: But I confess in your Way of treating upon it in Print, and explaining of it to your Followers in Private, The People of the Establishment may have good Reason to ask, *What new Doctrine is this?* and You ought not to be offended if They go somewhat further, Crying out in their Surprise, *What will This Babler say? He seemeth to be a Setter-forth of some strange fanatical Opinions.*

I believe then as much as You do, Sir, that the Bulk of our People are greatly unacquainted with your newly-revived Manner of handling this Subject, because It was no way necessary They shou'd be taught so
to

to understand it, the CLERGY apprehending your *Notion* about it, had been long ago exploded as *Error* and *Nonsense*.

But whilst You have been thus engag'd in misleading the People, and filling their Heads with indigested Fancies, Why shou'd It be thought improper that some prudent Ministers have refus'd you their *Pulpits*, Disapproving your *Doctrine*, and not at all Pleas'd with some of your *Practices* ?

Your Friend *A. B.* (or even You yourself, if You was the Author of the Letter prefixed to the Pamphlet call'd the *Oxford Methodists*) seems plainly to allow These worthy Gentlemen can't fairly be condemn'd for their Refusal, if any Thing You have said or printed is contrary to *Scripture*, or the *Doctrine* of the Church of *England*; Why therefore is He or You Angry, or why must They be called *Proud*

and *Ill-natur'd, Envious* and *Narrow-minded*, when 'tis certain They have denied you upon such a Persuasion?

They have indeed many more Reasons than This to determine them; Such As your Rudeness to the whole Body of your Brethren in your Preface; your Reflections upon them upon other Occasions; the Contempt You bring upon our excellent *Liturgy*; the Misunderstandings You create between the Parochial Clergy and their People; the Causeless Doubts and Scruples You raise in the Minds of some well-disposed Christians; and the Encouragement You give to the Practice of *Conventicling* in several Parts of this City; But These are not insisted on, because if You have contradicted the *Doctrine* of the *Church*, That You must confess is alone sufficient to free them from Censure, and justify their Conduct.

But

But perhaps it may be asked, if This upon a Trial shall be found clear and evident, How comes It to pass, that our vigilant *Bishop* shou'd overlook a *Delinquent*, Who, notwithstanding your extraordinary Pretences, as a *Deacon*, are not authorised to preach at all without a Special Licence? and why don't All the *Clergy* refuse for the same Reason as Some have done?

Now here I don't dare to assign every Cause of this Omission; (for I remember I just now found Fault with You for preaching without a *proper Commission*) But in general, You know 'tis usual for a Number of Men to think often differently, and sometimes very inoffensively about the same Subject; And in particular I reply to these Questions; It may be, Amidst a Multiplicity of other Business, Your Case has not yet been fully considered by the *Bishop*; Or, He may not chuse to

to act in an Affair where the *Clergy* themselves have full power to prevent your Preaching without Him ; You may be thought too inconsiderable for publick Notice ; Or, It may be judg'd unadviseable to shew an open Dislike, lest your *Novel Sect*, like most Others, shou'd increase by Opposition ; Possibly your *Sermon*, tho' of the *Third* Edition, may have been wholly disregarded by most of the Superior *Clergy* ; And probably your apparent Zeal, and the seeming Innocency of your Intentions, may plead your Excuse with Many of great Candour and Moderation ; Or, great Allowances may be made by them for the Weakness of a boyish Judgment ; Or, lastly, 'tis likely, Some Others, Who are Strangers to your *innovating Doctrine* and *conventicling Practice*, may in pity to the Poor admit you into their *Pulpits*, because it is readily granted this

Winter

Winter You have much served the Cause and Interest of *Charity-Schools*; But These and Fifty other Reasons are of no Weight at all for your Preaching in those Churches, where the *Rectors* have considered the evil Tendency of your *Doctrine*, and Who therefore have taken the Liberty to satisfy their Consciences.

I come now Sir, to the chief Design of this Epistle, and shall endeavour to convince you, You have advanced *Doctrine* contrary to *that* of the Church of *England*; to which purpose I have only time to mention one remarkable Passage of your Sermon, Page 4, where You tell your Readers; *It is too plain beyond all Contradiction, that comparatively but Few of those that are born of Water are born of the Spirit likewise; or, to use another Scriptural Way of speaking, Many of those that are baptised with*

Water

Water are not effectually at least baptised with the Holy Ghost.

But Prithee Sir, Attend now to these few following Places which I here set before you to confront your ill-grounded Assertion; and likewise those other I refer to at the Bottom, * Which ought All of them some time ago coolly to have been considered, before publicly contradicted by One who has subscribed our *Articles* and *Liturgy*.

In the Office of *Publick Baptism* our Church teaches us this Lesson; that Infants are *baptised with Water and the Holy Ghost*; that at the time They are baptised, They are *sanctified with the Holy Ghost*; that They coming to Holy Baptism receive *Remission of their Sins by Spiritual Regeneration*; She prays to

* See the Passages to the same Purpose in the Office of *Private Baptism*, and That of those of *Riper Years*, in the *Catechism*, in the Order of *Confirmation*, and the *Articles*.

God

God to give his Holy Spirit to such Infants, that they may be born again; and that the Old Man may be so buried in them that the New Man may be raised up in them; And after They are baptised, She declares them Regenerate, and gives hearty Thanks to God that It has pleased him to regenerate such Infants with his Holy Spirit; And in a Rubrick at the end of the Office, She says upon this Presumption; It is certain by God's Word that Children which are baptised, Dying before They commit actual Sin, are undoubtedly saved.

All This, Sir, I take to be direct Evidence against You, not to be evaded by the Word *Effectually*, with which You thought proper to guard your Assertion; for certainly You must acknowledge if You allow *Infant Baptism*, and believe the 16th Article, that Infants may be baptised with the Holy Ghost *effectually*, tho' afterwards, when
 E They

They come to riper Years, for want of improving by their own Endeavours, the Grace bestowed upon them at the time of Baptism, They may fall into Sin: In the very same Manner as any Distemper'd Person may receive an *effectual* Cure from his Physician, tho' after his Recovery, He may fall again into the same or a worse Distemper by his own male Practices.

Indeed If Somewhat be wanting at Baptism on the part of the *Recipient*, Which is a Case may happen where a wicked adult Person comes to this *Sacrament* without *Faith* and *Repentance*; Such an One may be baptised with Water, and yet not receive the Spiritual Benefits of *Baptism* at that time offer'd to Him; Whose Want of due Qualifications may hinder the blessed Effects of *this Ordinance*, just as the *notoriously Immoral* Person may eat and drink the Bread and Wine, without

without partaking of the Fruits of *Christ's Passion*, in the *other Sacrament*.

But according to the Practice of our Church, This is a Case can rarely, I hope never happens; We maintain the Necessity of *Infant Baptism*; And Accordingly, Some Few excepted, All the Members of our Church were baptised in Infancy; What therefore I wou'd fain know cou'd be wanting on their Part, at that Time, to hinder God's Grace in Baptism?

When Infants grow up, They may, as our Church says, *Depart from Grace given, and fall into Sin*; They may break their first Engagements, and so lose their Right to the Benefits of the *Baptismal Covenant* promised on God's Part; But in this Case, What is the Remedy left them according to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*? Why here the Church

supposes They have already been *Regenerate* and *Born again*, and so does not command them to be baptised or born again a Second time, for to be born more than once in a Spiritual Sense, is just as impossible, as to be born twice in a Natural; but All that can be done in this Matter, is, to use the several Means of Grace that are still afforded towards their Recovery and Amendment; or in one Word, as the Scripture expresses it, They must be *renewed again by Repentance*.

I hope therefore You'll please to alter your Practice, and no longer preach up the *Necessity* of the *New Birth*, till You better understand the *Nature* and *Commencement* of it; for to tell Christians They must be born again, Who in the soundest Sense were born again in their Infancy, at least is a great Impropriety; And Besides your Time will be much better spent, after
having

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having given so much just Occasion
of Offence to your Brethren, if in-
stead of *Regeneration*, You insist more
upon the Necessity of *Amendment*
and *Repentance*.

Perhaps, Sir, at another Oppor-
tunity, I may make it my Business
to point out some more Mistakes in
your Writings and Conduct, but if
I shou'd not, I dare say, You'll
excuse

Your humble Servant,

Tristram Land.

October 18,
1737.

F I N I S.

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